

TOWN OF NORWOOD
School Committee Meeting
James R. Savage Educational Center
Wednesday, August 26, 2015

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, August 26, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Mr. James Gormley, Chairman, Mrs. Courtney Rau-Rogers, Mr. John Badger, Ms. Lisa Igoe and Mr. Patrick McDonough.

Administrators Present: Mr. James Hayden, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Alec Wyeth, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment; and Ms. Ann Marie Ellis, Director of Finance and Operations.

Minutes: Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes of July 8, 2015, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Mr. Badger abstained).

Correspondence: Chairman Gormley acknowledged receipt of a letter from the Norwood Teachers' Association requesting to begin negotiations.

Warrants: Chairman Gormley informed that there were warrants to be signed.

At this point in the meeting, Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to move Engineering Design Students (Appearances) up on the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Appearances: Engineering Design Students: Dr. Michael Crowley and students from his Engineering Classes were here this evening to update the Committee with regard to their status in the prestigious inventing competition they are involved with. The Students introduced themselves and explained their own involvement in this project. The following students were here this evening:

Luke Andrews – Senior
Veronica Andres – Sophomore
George Rammah – Senior
Ioana Stoica – Junior
Janelle Kelleher – Sophomore
Anuja Mitra – Sophomore
Victoria Mullen – Sophomore

Dr. Crowley explained that the invention had to solve a real world problem and had to be unique. Together this group of students chose to begin the process of creating a retractable awning that would solve the snow/ice accumulation problem

on the front roof of the High School near the clock tower. This awning was designed to save on shoveling and to protect the school from leaks and rot. The students read a list of people and businesses in the community who wrote letters of support. Our students are currently one school out of 35 national finalists.

Dr. Crowley informed that September 8th is the date the final proposals need to be submitted by. He also said that 15 winners will get \$10,000 to build a prototype and will also receive a year's worth of publicity.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to write a letter of support on behalf of the School Committee, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

NFACT – Donation Presentation: Mr. James Bowers was here this evening to present the Committee with another donation from the on-going Fine Arts Fundraiser. Mr. Bowers reminded that members of the public can purchase plaques for the arm rests of the seats in the Norwood High School Performing Arts Center. This evening's donation was for \$3,860.50 for a total donation to date of a little over \$10,000 for the Fine Arts Programs. Anyone still wishing to purchase plaques may do so by e-mailing the organization at NFACT.org.

Public Forum: Chairman Gormley informed that this was the time in the meeting for members of the public to address the School Committee with items that they would like to see on a future agenda.

Mr. Dennis Drummey was here this evening to ask the Committee Members to reconsider changing the name of the winter break back to Christmas Recess on the school calendar. He shared his thoughts on this matter and informed the Committee what surrounding towns call the break.

Mr. James Drummey was here this evening to share his concerns on taking God away from the Communities and said that many of today's problems revolve around this situation. By adding Christmas Recess back to the calendar, it would be a small step of recognizing God and start heading back in the right direction.

Announcements: None.

Reports: None.

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: Thursday October 8, 2015 Night Field Hockey vs. Framingham and Friday October 9, 2015 Football vs. Milton: Mr. Hayden informed that due to a Fine Arts Conflict, the night field hockey game will be on Thursday October 8th and the night football game will be on Friday, October 9th. These dates were changed so that these games, and the Fine Arts presentation of *Into the Woods* can all get a good turnout.

Opening of School Preparations – Power Point Slides: Mr. Hayden updated the Committee on all the preparations that were made over the summer break to get ready for the new school year.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mr. McDonough thanked the school custodians for all their hard work over the summer.

Enrollment Projections: Mr. Hayden provided the Committee with enrollment projections for the coming school year. He said that we have a good track on families moving into the District, but many times families that move out of town forget to inform us. Mr. Hayden will keep the Members informed on enrollment.

Policy: Review of School Committee Policy: School Related Fund Raising Policy (KHA): Mr. Hayden reviewed with the Committee the updated School Related Fund Raising Policy (KHA). Mr. Hayden said there was some questions regarding an annual summary report from the parent groups that do fundraising for school organizations. Mr. Hayden said he hopes that the legacy of parents who do great jobs to continue on even when those parents move on from the group. Mr. Hayden said we are all about working together and carrying on their good work.

Mr. McDonough said that parents have approached him regarding the “red tape” involved in reporting from the parents’ end. Mr. McDonough said that many of these groups have their own tax i.d. numbers, adding that they want to work with administration, but not work for them to support these groups.

Mr. Hayden’s intent in talking with the groups was to help them and for everyone to follow internal revenue guidelines. Mr. Hayden said we are trying to assist them not give them more work. Mr. Hayden said it is important that school officials know what events are going on under the auspices of the Norwood Public Schools.

Chairman Gormley said some of this policy is under the guidelines of MGL.

Mr. McDonough said he was just looking for clarifications on this policy this evening.

Budget: FY16 Budget: Mr. Hayden said Ms. Tess Gautreaux from out technology department left her position to pursue other things last spring and he added that the person they have hired to fill her position has pulled out and will not be coming to Norwood. Mr. Hayden said that he, Ms. Ellis and Mr. Kidd have tried to come up with some other ideas and they are interested in looking into managed network services at this point. He said that this would be temporary, but would probably cost half of the \$60,000-\$70,000 allotted for that line item. He figured it would be for about six months and would save money for the district. He added that this will

give us the opportunity to get the job done and give Mr. Kidd an opportunity to see which direction the Technology Department will be going in.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mr. Badger made a motion to give permission to explore this avenue of managed network services and to continue with the RFP process with the intent to come back to the School Committee with updates and recommendations from Mr. Kidd, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Kindergarten Grant Notification: Mr. Hayden reminded that when we were planning our budget, we needed to deduct \$150,000 from our Kindergartens aides, and we have recently found out that \$114,260 has been reinstated. Mr. Hayden reminded that we voted to keep these positions as a priority for our district. Mr. Hayden said that that money that was freed up should be kept as a funding source if our enrollment numbers become a problem. Mr. Hayden also said that as more students move into our district with special needs, we might also need to hire more paraprofessional aides as well. Mr. Hayden said he will have another enrollment report at the next meeting.

Ms. Ellis added that we need to keep an eye on the Transportation Department as more students in the district may mean more students that need transportation.

Old Business: Strategic Plan Update: Mr. Hayden said that we use the data from the MCAS as a goal for strategic planning and district determined measures, but we have not yet received the results of the PARCC testing to date. Mr. Hayden said more data should be coming in during late September and early October. Mr. Hayden said that he is suggesting a School Committee retreat to bounce around ideas and do some planning.

Dr. Wyeth said he wants to be sure that the new math program takes off without a hitch this fall and we are planning on some great professional development for staff.

New Business: Food Service Proposal: Mr. Hayden congratulated Ms. Jane McLucas on her new position as director of Food Services for the School Department for Portland, ME. She is a true professional and will be staying on with us to get the new school year up and running. Mr. Hayden said it will be difficult to get someone this time of year, as we want someone in the area and most would be committed to their districts as the school year is almost under way. Mr. Hayden said he thinks that we may be able to find someone by January. He would like to put out an RFP for vendors who do managed food services to see what we might be able to get. Mr. Hayden said we are trying to explore ways to save money for our school district. He said Jane did a great job for our schools for many years, but his recommendation is

to do some shopping to find out the best way to go at this point. Mr. Hayden said that there would still be a manager from the company over-seeing the Department.

Ms. Rau-Rogers said this change has happened in her school district and she said all the front-line people that the students see each day stayed on and it's been working pretty well.

Mr. Badger made a motion to put together an RFP for the Food Services position, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-1.

Facilities Review Study – Long Range School Facilities Plan: Mr. Hayden reminded that there was a facilities review in 2000, and he was interested in the Committee's thoughts on the need for a new facilities study. Mr. Hayden said he thinks this study would cost about \$100,000, which he would suggest asking Town Meeting for support with the financing.

There was some discussion regarding the fact that the old study is now 15 years old and the demographics has changed over the years since that report was done.

Mr. Hayden said this has been brought up by Town Meeting Members. Mr. Hayden feels this report will help him convey to the Town that he is leaving no stone unturned, and that he is doing his homework when people suggest closing schools, redistricting the schools and other ways to save the Town money.

Mr. Hayden said that we could do a request for proposals to find out what a study would cost, so that we have that information in hand, for future discussions.

Mr. Badger made a motion to send out a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a facilities study, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mr. Hayden left out copies of the Mount Vernon Group Report for the Members to review.

Approval of Eight (8) Donations:

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to vote on all the donations together after Mr. Hayden reads all the donations out loud.

Mr. Hayden recommended accepting the following donations:

(1) A donation in the amount of \$470.00 for the Willett Early Childhood Center from Lifetouch for spring pictures;

(2) A donation from Bay State Textiles in the amount of \$239.01 from the textile bins at each school:

Balch	\$11.00
Callahan	\$15.50
Cleveland	\$51.50
Oldham	\$21.50
Prescott	\$18.00
Willett	\$51.51
Coakley	\$ 8.25
High School	\$34.75
Savage Educational Center	<u>\$27.00</u>
Total:	\$239.01

(3) A donation from Norwood Bank President, Chris Dixon, for the generous donation of \$1,248 to pay for summer school tuition for four (4) students at the Coakley Middle School;

(4) A donation from the Christopher Catanese Children's Foundation in the amount of \$500.00 for the CFCE Village Center;

(5) A donation from Mr. Peter Catanese II and Central Motors, Inc. of Norwood in the amount of \$200.00 for the CFCE Village Center;

(6) A donation from Mr. Gerald R. Lavoie, Executive Vice President & COO of Dedham Savings Bank in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the CFCE Village Center;

(7) A donation from Mrs. Ann LaRosa of Norwood in the amount of \$50.00 for the CFCE Village Center;

(8) A donation of books for Elementary Students valued at \$563.22 from Mrs. Joan Briggs of Norwood;

(9) A donation of time and equipment from Cataldo Landscaping to help complete a courtyard garden at the Cleveland School this summer;

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to approve all nine donations, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

School Committee Agendas for the Upcoming Year: Mr. Hayden put together an outline for the Members of items that should go on the agenda at different times of the year.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to push back the time of the meetings from 7:00 to 7:30 pm, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers for discussion.

Mr. Gormley suggested using a consent agenda for items that would not need a lot of discussions, which would help keep the length of the meetings under control.

With regard to the motion on the table, the Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Mrs. Rau-Roger made a motion to restructure the agenda to have a consent agenda for certain items and save the lengthier items to be added to the end of the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

With regard to the outline, Chairman Gormley said he would prefer to get negotiations under way earlier instead of waiting for January to put the sub Committees together.

Mr. Hayden said he will address that at the next meeting.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers said she would like a special education update at the beginning of the year as well as the end of the year to focus on trends and predictions.

Personnel: Personnel Hiring Update: Mr. Hayden said he had the new teacher orientation this week and he still needs to hire an English teacher at the High School and approximately six (6) paraprofessionals. Mr. Hayden said we will be ready for the start of school.

School Committee Addenda: Mr. Badger welcomed everyone back to a new school year. He thanked the staff that has been coming in on their own time to get their classrooms ready.

Ms. Igoe said she was looking forward to a new school year.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers also welcomed students and staff and she wished her nephews and niece a great school year.

Mr. McDonough said this School Committee Room was packed with citizens who want to see Christmas recess added back to the calendar.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to change the calendar wording from *Winter Recess* to *Christmas Recess*, which was seconded by Ms. Igo.

Ms. Igoe asked for some background on why the wording was changed to begin with.

The Members shared the reasons, including the fact that they felt the need to be more inclusive to everyone in the Community and the fact that this Committee does not vote on religious items, nor should it elevate one religion higher than other religions.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers explained that the calendar does list all the holidays on it.

Ms. Igoe thought that calling it a *Holiday Recess* might be a good compromise

Ms. Igoe made an amendment to the motion to call *Winter Recess* to *Holiday Recess*.

Ms. Igoe made another amendment to the motion to call *Winter Recess* to *Holiday Recess* digitally on the school's website this year and on the calendar that goes home to families beginning next year, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Mrs. Rau-Rogers voted against and, although Mr. Gormley did not want to vote for this he did vote in favor to compromise and put an end to this item).

Executive Session: None.

Adjournment: Mr. McDonough made a motion for adjournment at 9:15 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. Rau-Rogers . The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee